

Signs of Success

A Resource Center for Families of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

What is an IEP?

The IEP is an Individualized Education Program. It is a written document outlining the instruction and related services for students with disabilities. Your child's IEP is built upon their strengths and needs. It is designed to help them achieve success in school, at home, at work, and in the community. The IEP allows everyone with a role in your child's education to help determine where your child is going, how they will

get there, how long it will take and what help they may need along the way.

The IEP meeting is very important. Parents, the school personnel, and other IEP team members attending the meeting will review and discuss information about your child to develop the IEP. It provides an excellent opportunity to ask questions and share important insights about your child, whom

you know better than anyone else does. The school needs to know what your child is like at home and in the community, as well as your child's interests and activities.

If you have any questions or would like help in preparing for your IEP meeting, contact Partners for Success at (410) 480-4597 or Partners @msd.edu

Before The IEP Meeting

- Write down your child's strengths, needs, and interests.
- Think about your child's educational progress, what has been working and what has not.
- Write down your concerns as a parent about his or her education.
- Write down the vision you have for your child for the future as well as for the next school year.
- Write down any questions or comments you may have.
- Write down any related services you feel your child needs. (speech, OT, PT, etc.)
- Remember to bring your notes with you to the IEP meeting.
- If needed, plan to bring someone with you to the meeting such as a spouse, relative, or friend. Be sure to notify the school that you are planning to bring someone with you to the IEP meeting.

Come Prepared

- Come prepared to listen and to work together in the best interests of your child.
- Understand that there may be more than one way to reach a goal.
- Be honest, patient and thoughtful.
- Encourage open communication
- Be committed to working together
- Listen to each IEP team member so that the written document clearly expresses what services the student will receive.
- Focus on the student's needs.
- Understand your importance as a member of the IEP team.

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UPCOMING WORKSHOPS
February 26, 2004, Parent Empowerment, Parenting Doesn't Have to Make You Crazy, 7:00—9:00 p.m.
MSD Frederick Campus, Ely Building, Seminar Room

Parents and IEP's Understanding Your Role as a Parent

Friday, February 27, 2004
10:00 - 12:00 p.m.
MD School for the Deaf
Columbia Campus
Main Building
Library Conference Room

Monday, March 1, 2004
10:00 - 12:00 p.m.
MD School for the Deaf
Frederick Campus
Ely Building—Seminar Room

Saturday, March 27, 2004
Sib Shop Special Workshop for hearing children with Deaf or Hard of Hearing Brothers and Sisters. Cost is \$5.00 per child, lunch will be provided
10:00—2:00 p.m.
MD School for the Deaf
Columbia Campus—Baker Building

To register for any of these workshops contact Cheri Dowling or Maryann Swann at (410) 480-4597(v/tty) or CAD800@aol.com

At The IEP Meeting

- Make sure that everyone at the meeting remembers that the meeting is about a real child – your child.
- Discuss what is going on with your child now. Where is he or she doing well and where is he or she not doing so well.
- Share your visions for your child, both long-term and short-term.
- Discuss your child's strengths and weaknesses.
- Discuss related services that may be needed for your child.
- Use your child's progress reports and other information you know about your child to make appropriate decisions.
- Ask questions. If you don't understand something, ask to have it explained in a way that you do understand.
- When you believe that the teacher and school personnel are doing a good job, tell them so.
- Be a good listener.
- If your child is age 14, ask what is the plan for Transition. Federal and State regulations require additional planning as students reach age 14.
- You may not want to agree to a proposed IEP at the end of the meeting. Review the proposed IEP document at home. If you disagree with what is being proposed in the document, you must notify the school as soon as possible to resolve the disagreement. Understand, however, that the school is required by law to implement the IEP even without your signature
- Be respectful and courteous to all team members.

After the IEP Meeting

- Your child's IEP must be reviewed at least once a year to determine whether the annual goals have been achieved and to revise the IEP if necessary.
 - Your child's school must inform you regularly about your child's progress. Schools usually do this by providing quarterly report cards.
 - If your child is not making adequate progress, an IEP meeting should be held to review the IEP and make needed changes.
 - You may request an IEP meeting at any time during the year if you believe it is important to consider changes in your child's IEP.
 - Use activities at home to help your child meet IEP goals.
- An IEP is not written in stone. It is a working document that can be changed at any time based on your child's needs.
- When parents, teachers, administrators and related service providers all work together, this can help guarantee student success!***

RESOURCES

- ☺ Building IEPs with Maryland Families: What A Great **IDEA**. Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services. www.msde.state.us
- ☺ Families and Advocates Partnership for Education (FAPE). www.fape.org
- ☺ PACER Center, Inc., 8161 Northdale Blvd, Minneapolis, MN 55437 (888) 248-0822

Alphabet Soup

ADA - The Americans with Disabilities Act.

FERPA - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

ADD/ADHD - Attention Deficit/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

FC - Frederick Campus

CC—Columbia Campus

ASL - American Sign Language

AT - Assistive Technology

DD - Developmental Delay

ED - Emotional Disturbance

EI - Early Intervention

MSDE - Maryland State Department of Education

MSD - Maryland School for the Deaf

FAPE - Free Appropriate Public Education; Families and Advocates Partnership for Education

IFSP - Individualized Family Service Program

IEP - Individualized Education Program

ITP - Individualized Transition Plan

LD - Learning Disability